

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 are pending in this application. None of the claims have been amended in this response. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being unpatentable over *Matthews et al.* (US Pat. 4,602,129). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection because the cited reference does not disclose or suggest the present invention, as described in all independent claims 1, 4, 7 and 10.

Specifically, *Matthews* does not teach or suggest a “common phone number issued by a communication terminal” as recited in claims 1, 4, 7 and 10. The “telephone number” relied upon by the Examiner in *Matthews* teaches that each telephone number (i.e., “address”) is used as an identification number, wherein a user must enter each of the numbers intended for distribution, or create a distribution list (col. 22, lines 54-68). Thus, the number is not “common” to the system, but rather it is unique to each of the registered users. As described previously, one of the advantages of the common phone number is that the sender does not have to know the phone numbers of registered members (see specification lines 19-24). This cannot be said of the teaching in *Matthews*. It follows that *Matthews* does not disclose “registering a predetermined communication terminal so as to correspond to said issued common phone number” as recited in claims 1 and 7, and similarly recited in claims 4 and 10. Again, the “addresses” disclosed in *Matthews* require the user to input each of the numbers for distribution

Also, *Matthews* is completely silent on the feature reciting “means for reading at any time the message file left in said message management unit, in a case where the message file is left in said message management unit, and the message left on said bulletin board unit” as recited in claim 1 and 7, and similarly recited in claims 4 and 10. The system and method in *Matthews* only teaches the distribution of audio messages (see col. 1, lines 12-35) and is silent regarding the feature of reading text and other kinds of messages.

For at least these reasons, Applicant submits that the rejections are improper and should be withdrawn, as claims 1, 4, 7 and 10, and their respective dependent claims 2-3, 5-6, 8-9 and 11-12, are allowable over the cited reference.

In light of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims 1-12 are in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. Should there be any additional issues that the

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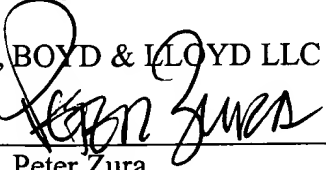
Examiner would like to address, the Applicant encourages the Examiner to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney.

No extensions of time are required for this response. However, should any incidental charges be required, please charge Deposit Account 02-1818 for any insufficiency of payment.

Respectfully submitted,

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